KOTADIA): (a) and (b) Amendment of the National Highways Act, 1956 to enable the Government of India to charge fees for the use of selected stretches of National Highways with a view to augment budgetary resources for development and maintenance of National Highways in the country is under consideration.

(c) There has been no reaction from the State Governments.

(d) It is too early to indicate the basis of charging fees from the users of National Highways. Fees is to be ploughed back for development and maintenance of National Highways spread all over the country.

(e) The proposal to amend the National Highways Act is under process in consultation with the Ministry of Law & Justice.

**Outlay for new National Highways during Eighth Five Year Plan**

357. SHRI VITHALRAO MADHAV RAO JADHAV:
SHRI BHUVNESH CHATURVEDI:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total outlay in eighth five year plan period for creating new National Highways in different parts of the country;

(b) what would be the share of Maharashtra in that plan;

(c) the number of proposals forwarded by Maharashtra Government for converting State highways into National Highways, especially in Marathwada region; and

(d) what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI MANUBHAI KOTADIA): (a) The outlays for the Central Sector Road Development Programmes including new National Highways in the 8th Five Year Plan are yet to be finalised by the Planning Commission.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) The Government of Maharashtra has been projecting inclusion of eleven roads in the National Highways grid, which *inter alia* include three proposals criss-crossing the Marathwada region. However, it is not possible to take a general decision on declaration of new National Highways till the 8th Five Year Plan is finalised.

**Refuelling at U.S. aircraft at Indian airports**

358. CHOWDHRY HARI SINGH:
SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA:
SHRI SARADA MOHANTY:
DR. BAPU KALDATE:
SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:
SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE:
SHRI SHANTI TYAGI:
DR. G. VIJAYA MOHAN REDDY:
DR. RATNAKAR PANDEY:
SHRI G. G. SWELL:
SHRI SHABBIR AHMAD SALARIA:
SHRI HARVENDRA SINGH HANSPAL:
SHRI ARANGIL SREEDHARAN:
SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had permitted refuelling of the U.S. Air Force transport aircraft engaged in Gulf War at Indian Airports; if so, the details thereof;

(b) the extent to which it was in consonance with India's declared policy not to take sides with any of the warring factions;

(c) whether it had sharp critical reaction from Iraq and other countries, if so, in what terms and what is Government's response thereto; and

(d) whether Government propose to stop the facility of refuelling?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI KAMAL MORARKA): (a) Government had permitted transit and refuelling facilities only for US Air Force transport aircraft, to be used solely for transporting non-lethal supplies and for evacuating personnel on humanitarian, medical and emergency grounds.

(b) Government had viewed the provisions of this facility as consistent with its established practices and policies.

(c) Government are aware of the reaction of Iraq. No formal protest has been received from Iraq by the Government. It has been conveyed to the Government of Iraq that the transit and refuelling facilities provided to US Air Force transport aircraft were solely for the purpose of transporting non-lethal cargo and for the evacuation of personnel on humanitarian, medical and emergency considerations.

(d) With effect from 20th February, 1991, no transit and refuelling is taking place.

**"INDO-US Herpetological Project"**

359. SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA:
DR. BAPU KALDATE:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that under the Indo-US Herpetological Project the country has been losing rare fauna since 1984 and that the National Museum of Natural History set up to promote the cause of environment protection has been flouting the rules in this regard;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the project which was supposed to last till 1987 has been extended till 1993;

(c) whether Government have inquired into the reasons for extending the project till 1993; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof stating the action taken by Government in

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SMT. MANEKA GANDHI): (a) The Indo-US Herpetological Project is a research project, undertaken by the National Museum of Natural History, New Delhi in collaboration with Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Pittsburgh, USA, to study the environmental diversity of the amphibians and reptiles in selected regions of Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra. Such of the specimens collected by field teams from selected sites as require further examination and analysis are sent to Carnegie Museum. The Project provides that 50 per cent of the collected specimens will be returned to the National Museum of Natural History after completion of their study at the Carnegie Museum.

(b) to (d) Very limited field work was reported to have been completed upto 1990. Therefore, an extension of the project for another three years was approved in terms of the memorandum of understanding governing the project.

**World Bank funds for irrigation projects in India**

360. DR. BAPU KALDATE:
SHRI A. G. KULKARNI:
SHRI VISHWASRAO RAMRAO PATIL:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SARDAR JAGJIT SINGH AURORA:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the recent press reports that the World Bank has announced not to release the funds sanctioned as a loan for irrigation projects whose implementation has been delayed; if so, what are the names of such projects, State-wise; and

(b) what steps Government propose to take to convince the World Bank of Government's intention for speedy implementation?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RE-